

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): An image processing method for photoelectrically reading an image on a film and then performing a blemish elimination processing, comprising the steps of:

reading a defective image ~~as information related to a defect on the film; to provide~~
information regarding a defect on a film;

then, reading photoelectrically said image to obtain an actual image;

performing preprocessing for the blemish elimination processing on said defective image while reading photoelectrically said image; and

performing the blemish elimination processing on a blemish of said actual image, based on the defective image subjected to said preprocessing,

wherein said preprocessing comprises edge enhancement processing.

2. (currently amended): The image processing method according to claim 1, wherein said preprocessing is finished ~~up to completion of obtaining said actual image by the~~
time the actual image is obtained.

3. (original): The image processing method according to claim 1,
wherein the image on the film is sequentially read on a plane basis, and
wherein said actual image is obtained and the blemish elimination processing is
performed on the actual image by using said defective image subjected to said preprocessing.

4. (original): The image processing method according to claim 1,
wherein said defective image is evaluated to obtain a evaluated result, and
wherein said preprocessing and said blemish elimination processing are stopped in
accordance with said evaluated result.

5. (currently amended): The image processing method according to claim 1,
wherein said preprocessing is ~~edge enhancement processing of the defective image or~~ comprises
production of flag information which ~~imparts~~ indicates the presence or absence of the defect on a
pixel unit basis from the defective image.

6. (original): The image processing method according to claim 1, wherein said
defective image is photoelectrically read by using infrared light.

7. (currently amended): An image processing method for photoelectrically reading
an image on a film and then performing a blemish elimination processing, comprising the steps
of:

reading a defective image as ~~information related to a defect on the film~~ to provide
information regarding a defect on a film;

performing preprocessing for the blemish elimination processing on said defective image;
and

performing the blemish elimination processing on a blemish of an actual image which is obtained by reading photoelectrically said image, based on the defective image subjected to said preprocessing,

wherein said preprocessing comprises edge enhancement processing.

8. (currently amended): The image processing method according to claim 7, wherein said preprocessing is ~~edge enhancement processing of the defective image or~~ comprises production of flag information which ~~imparts~~ indicates the presence or absence of the defect on a pixel unit basis from the defective image.

9. (original): The image processing method according to claim 7, wherein said defective image is photoelectrically read by using infrared light.

10. (original): The image processing method according to claim 7,
wherein said defective image is evaluated to obtain a evaluated result, and
wherein said preprocessing and said blemish elimination processing are stopped in accordance with said evaluated result.

11. (currently amended): The image processing method according to claim 7, wherein said preprocessing is finished ~~up to completion of obtaining said actual image~~ by the time the actual image is obtained.

12. (previously presented): An image processing method according to claim 1, wherein said actual image is an image without blemishes after performing the blemish elimination processing.

13. (previously presented): An image processing method according to claim 7, wherein said actual image is an image without blemishes after performing the blemish elimination processing.

14. (currently amended): An image processing method according to claim ~~5~~1, wherein said edge enhancement comprises enhancing an edge of an image corresponding to a defective portion, emphasizing a boundary of the defective portion, and defining the position of the defect of the defective image.

15. (previously presented): An image processing method according to claim 1, wherein the preprocessing is performed during or before the image on the film is fine scanned by visible light.

16. (previously presented): An image processing method according to claim 7, wherein the preprocessing is performed during or before the image on the film is fine scanned by visible light.

17. (previously presented): An image processing method according to claim 4, wherein said evaluated result is a result on whether image data which is smaller than a given threshold value is present before performing the preprocessing.

18. (previously presented): An image processing method according to claim 17, wherein if a value of a defect in the defective image does not meet the threshold value, a blemish

elimination processing is not needed and the defective image is directly sent to an image processing subsection without being subjected to preprocessing.

19. (currently amended): An image processing method according to claim 51, wherein said edge enhanced image data of the defective image is binary coded.

20. (previously presented): An image processing method according to claim 7, wherein preprocessing for the blemish elimination processing on the defective image is performed before reading photoelectrically the image to obtain an actual image.